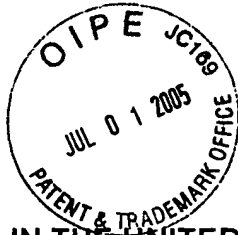


EXHIBIT B – Declaration of Mr. Hans-Wulf Pfeiffer

See attached sheets.



PATENT
03466-P0001B WWW/SBS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Applicant | Hans-Wulf Pfeiffer |
| Serial No. 09/929,267 | Filing Date: August 14, 2001 |
| Title of Application: | Method Of Increasing The Boundary Layer Strength On Surfaces Of Workpieces Made Of Brittle Hard Materials |
| Confirmation No. 9985 | Art Unit: 1731 |
| Examiner | Christopher Fiorella |

Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
Post Office Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

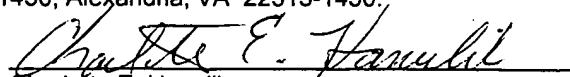
Declaration of Mr. Hans Wulf Pfeiffer (37 CFR §1.132)

I hereby declare and state as follows:

1. I, Mr. Hans Wulf Pfeiffer, am the inventor of patent application serial no. 09/929,267. A copy of my curriculum vitae is attached hereto in support of this Declaration.
2. I have extensive experience and have performed extensive experimentation involving the device described in my patent application serial no. 09/929,267 relating to ceramic engineering materials.

Mailing Certificate: I hereby certify that this correspondence is today being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as *First Class Mail* in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents and Trademarks; Post Office Box 1450; Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

March 22, 2004


Charlotte E. Hanulik

Page 2

Serial No. 09/929,267

Declaration of Mr. Hans Wulf Pfeiffer (37 CFR 1.132)

3. Based upon my years of experience and being one of ordinary skill in the art in methods of increasing boundary layer strengths on surfaces of workpieces made of brittle hard materials, I understand and one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the term "ceramic" to include only true ceramic materials and does not include non or near ceramic materials compositions such as for instance, cermets and cemented carbides.

4. As one of ordinary skill in the art reading U.S. Patent No. 3,573,023 ("the '023 patent") to Thomas et al., I understand the '023 patent to teach that while cermets and cemented carbides may be hardened by a force applied to a workpiece at room temperature, the temperature of ceramics on the other hand must be elevated substantially above room temperature prior to the application of a force to harden the workpiece.

5. I further declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Harold
February 09 2004

Hans-Wulf Pfeiffer
Mr. Hans Wulf Pfeiffer